



**Director of
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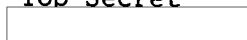
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MIDDLE EAST: West Bank Repercussions

The Israeli Government's handling of unrest in the West Bank is coming under mounting criticism from opponents at home and from Arab governments. []

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Prime Minister Begin's government today faces three no-confidence motions as a result of its West Bank policy. The leader of the opposition Labor Alignment admitted yesterday, however, that there was little chance that Begin would be turned out. []

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Egyptian officials have expressed regret over the violence, and the Cairo press has warned that Israel's actions could endanger the autonomy process. Syria and the PLO are planning to ask for an emergency session of the UN Security Council this week to consider the disturbances. []

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Comment: The student-led demonstrations and rising criticism at home and abroad will have little impact on Tel Aviv's determination to use whatever force is necessary to put down the unrest, which it regards as PLO inspired. Defense Minister Sharon said yesterday that he views the unrest as a test of Israel's efforts to break the back of PLO influence. He ordered curfews in two major towns and several refugee camps to continue. []

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The violence will complicate efforts to activate the autonomy negotiations, which are now in abeyance because of Egypt's rejection of Israel's demand that part of the next round of talks be held in Jerusalem. Cairo will be reluctant to negotiate while Arab and Palestinian attention is focused on the unrest. []

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USSR-AFGHANISTAN: Concern Over Factionalism

Moscow has been unable to end the feuding between the Parchamist and Khalqi factions of the Afghan People's Democratic Party.

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Ever since the invasion, Moscow has been trying to strengthen President Babrak's Parchamist faction, which dominates the government. The Parchamists, however, have substantially less support than the Khalqis in the military and at the grass roots of the party.

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The appointment of General Qader--who belongs to neither faction--as Acting Defense Minister was a gesture aimed at increasing the Khalqi stake in prosecuting the war.

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The formal Soviet message to the recent party conference was unusually candid in acknowledging the infighting and in urging party leaders to work for mutual trust and unity. Soviet media comment on the conference criticized some party members for their tendencies toward cliquishness.

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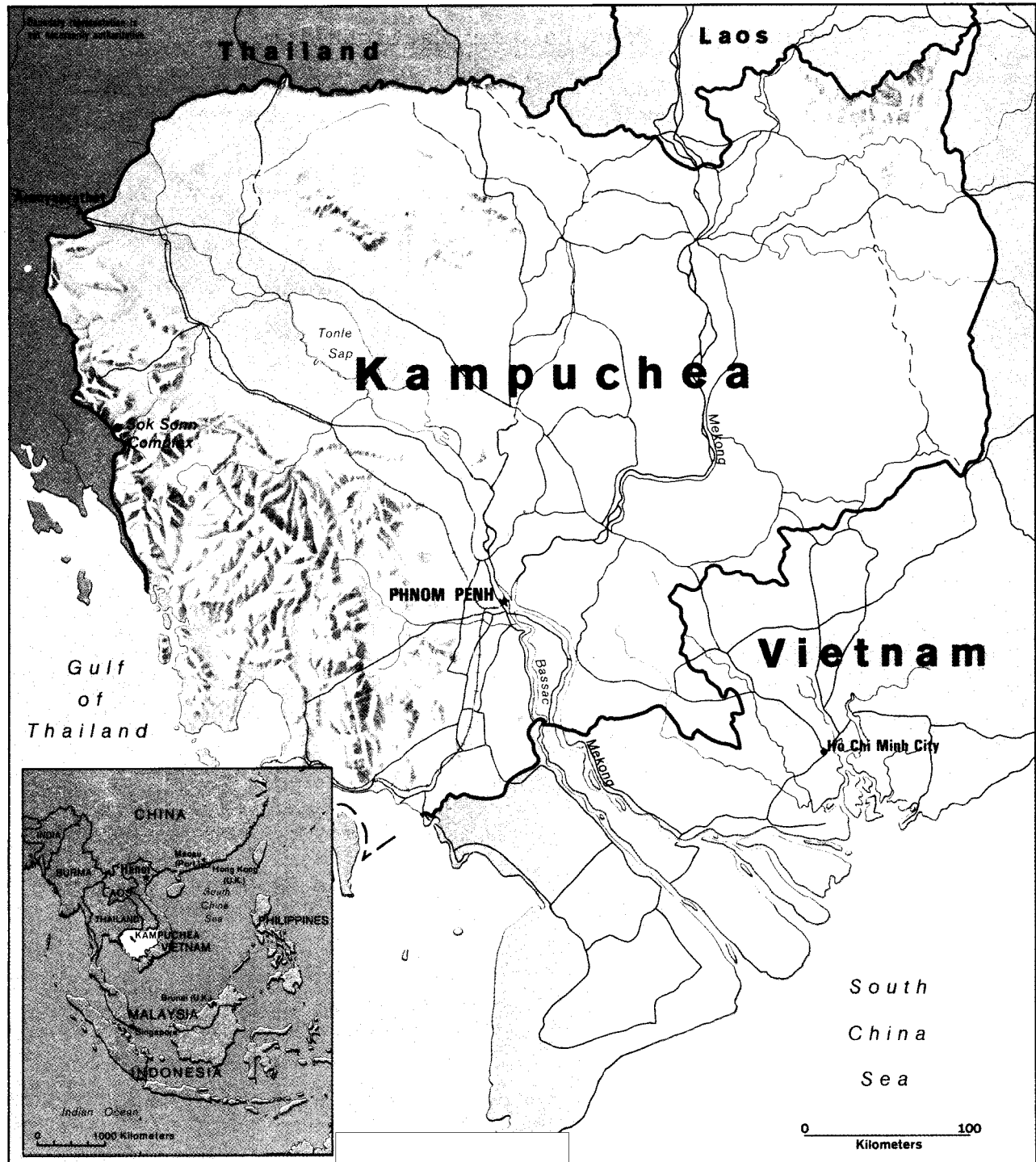
Comment: Developments at the conference indicate that the problem has not subsided. The Khalqis won the majority of the seats to the conference, but the Parchamists annulled the election results and stacked the meeting with their own supporters. Khalqi leaders are calling the conference a fraud.

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KAMPUCHEA-VIETNAM: Resistance Problems Mount

Vietnamese forces reportedly have disengaged and are moving out of the Sok Sonn area after several days of fighting against Kampuchean anti-Communist resistance forces there.

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Thai units are in the border area but have not clashed with the Vietnamese, who made at least one shallow penetration into Thai territory. As many as 7,000 Khmer civilians from Sok Sonn have moved into Thailand to escape the fighting.

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The Thai reportedly are willing to provide some material aid to the forces of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front. Front leader Son Sann, who is in Paris, has asked the US for emergency food and medicines for the civilians and for ammunition for his troops.

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Comment: Although Front forces may soon be able to reenter Sok Sonn, they will not be able to improve its defenses measurably. The base will remain vulnerable to Vietnamese attack.

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The future of ASEAN support to the Front may be decided later this month, when Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi is scheduled to visit Singapore and Malaysia.

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KENYA: Misgivings About US Support

Kenya's unhappiness over what it regards as inadequate US support could prompt President Moi to reconsider some aspects of his close relationship with the US. [redacted]

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This concern was reinforced by Somali President Siad's recent visit to Washington. Moi and other senior officials have complained to the US Embassy that Kenya is receiving less military aid than Somalia. They fear that Somalia still covets Somali-inhabited northeastern Kenya and have asked the US to persuade Siad to prove his good intentions by formally sanctioning the existing border. [redacted]

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Comment: Moi has come in for domestic criticism because he entered into the military access agreement with Washington and wants more economic aid to show for the relationship. The government has not submitted the agreement for discussion by either Kenya's parliament or its one legal party, which Moi heads. [redacted]

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The President is unlikely to abandon cooperation with the US, but he might signal his displeasure and seek to protect his domestic position by criticizing US and Western policy on African or broader Third World issues. He has gone along with US urgings to improve his relations with Siad and could seek to strengthen ties with his traditional ally, Ethiopia, at the expense of the recent reconciliation with Mogadishu. The Kenyans also may be more inclined to reject or delay responding to US proposals for additional military cooperation under the access agreement. [redacted]

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IRAN-IRAQ: Offensive Launched

Iran began its long-planned offensive yesterday and has breached Iraqi lines along the northern portion of the Dezful salient. [REDACTED]

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Comment: The Iranians apparently are applying pressure from several directions on the Iraqi salient west of Dezful and Shush, but their primary objective probably is to penetrate Iraqi lines from the north and southwest and entrap two Iraqi divisions. Iran will likely succeed soon in cutting off one of Iraq's two main supply roads--the northernmost route--because the area is lightly defended by less experienced units. [REDACTED]

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SAUDI ARABIA - LIBYA: Quarrel Intensifies

Saudi religious leaders, with at least the tacit approval of the government, have issued an Islamic legal opinion branding Libyan leader Qadhafi an unbeliever. The action responds to speeches by Qadhafi earlier this month naming Saudi Arabia as the number-one enemy of Islam, thereby striking at the political and religious legitimacy of the Saudi ruling family. The Saudis reportedly intend also to urge Libya's expulsion from the Islamic Conference, the Arab League, and the OAU. Libya has reacted by denouncing the Saudi religious establishment. [REDACTED]

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Comment: The condemnation by the conservative Saudi religious leaders carries no legal force outside Saudi Arabia, but its publication probably precludes the Libyan leader from making the pilgrimage to Islam's two holiest cities. It may well damage Qadhafi's standing with some devout Libyans, but this will not threaten his hold on power. Saudi urgings are unlikely to lead to Libya's expulsion from the three international organizations. [REDACTED]

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[redacted]

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⑨ PAKISTAN: Widening Discontent

Police last week forcibly dispersed a teachers' strike in Lahore, the capital of Punjab Province, and 14,000 teachers were detained on Sunday in Islamabad to prevent a similar demonstration. These disturbances follow an attempt to organize a protest rally in the North-West Frontier Province a week ago and student protests elsewhere. President Zia on Sunday stated that the country is not ready for elections because of the recent incidents. [redacted]

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Comment: Zia must maneuver cautiously, however, because a harsher clampdown on dissent could provoke further unrest. Punjab Province is the political center of Pakistan, and protest demonstrations there could quickly develop antigovernment overtones. Zia hopes his relatively restrained treatment of the protesters will avoid a confrontation between the people and martial law authorities, which could erode his support within the Army. [redacted]

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⑩ LIBYA-MALTA: Relations Improve

Libya and Malta have agreed to submit their dispute over drilling rights in the Mediterranean to the International Court of Justice. A communique issued over the weekend states that trade ties and joint economic ventures will be renewed--Libya's ban on Maltese goods already has been lifted--and that political and economic relations will be strengthened. Relations between Malta and Libya have been strained since August 1980, when Libyan gunboats forced an oil-drilling rig leased by Malta to leave the disputed waters. [redacted]

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Comment: The decision by the Court last month favoring Libya in a similar dispute with Tunisia probably has helped encourage Libyan leader Qadhafi to submit the Malta case. For his part, Prime Minister Mintoff faces stronger domestic opposition than he has known for years, and he will welcome the renewal of trade and possibly aid to help strengthen Malta's lagging economy. [redacted]

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